

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 02220 181047Z
ACTION ICAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2712
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DEPARTMENT PASS USICA FOR ACTION

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL BC
SUBJ: SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR FOR BOTSWANA

REF: (A) GABORONE 2118 AND PREVIOUS, (B) USICA 10210

1. SUMMARY. HOME AFFAIRS MINISTRY PERMSEC GOBE MATENGE CAME TO RESIDENCE EVENING JULY 17 AND FOR NEARLY AN HOUR OUTLINED REASONS WHY GOB REQUIRES ACTION ON ITS REQUEST FOR A SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR. ACTION REQUESTED: (A) NAMES OF US CANDIDATES FOR SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR POSITION; AND (B) ETA BY JULY 24. END SUMMARY.

2. MATENGE SAID RECENT DEVELOPMENTS HAVE MADE "EVEN MORE URGENT" THE GOB REQUIREMENT FOR SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR. FIRST, "ANOTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRY" HAS SENT A DRAFT "AGREEMENT FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH BOTSWANA" WHICH INVITES GOB TO FILL IN THE BLANKS, I.E., ASK FOR ANYTHING THEY WANT IN THE SPORTS FIELD. GOB IS INVITED TO "SPELL OUT" WHAT THEY WANT WITH ASSURANCES THAT PERSONNEL ARE AVAILABLE NOW. UNSPECIFIED FOREIGN COUNTRY IS SUGGESTING DELEGATION AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT IF GOB REQUESTS ENOUGH TO MAKE IT WORTHWHILE. MATENGE SAID GOB PREFERS TO RELY ON ENGLISH-SPEAKING FRIENDS, IMPLYING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CLEARLY THAT THE OTHER COUNTRY IN QUESTION IS NOT ENGLISH-SPEAKING. FYI: IT WOULD NOT SURPRISE US IF THE OTHER COUNTRY IS SPANISH-SPEAKING; A CUBAN ROVING AMBASSADOR WAS HERE JULY 13-14 (REPORTED SEPTTEL). END FYI.

3. AT SAME TIME AS ABOVE OFFER WAS RECEIVED, MATENGE SAID THE QUESTION HAD BEEN ASKED IN PARLIAMENT ABOUT ORGANIZATION

AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS IN BOTSWANA, AS GOVERNMENT HAD PROMISED. MATENGE SAID MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS COULD NOT EXPECT THAT OPEN-ENDED OFFER, PARA 2 ABOVE, COULD BE KEPT SECRET; AS A RESULT, MINISTER MMUSI FEELS HE MUST HAVE INFORMATION WITH WHICH TO REPLY IN PARLIAMENT INCLUDING, AS MINIMUM, ETA OF SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR OR GOB WILL FEEL UNBEARABLE PRESSURE TO ACCEPT THE NEW OFFER.

4. FINALLY, MATENGE SAID MINISTRY WAS "OVERWHELMED" BY THE AMOUNT OF CORRESPONDENCE THAT GOES UNANSWERED AS WELL AS ORGANIZATION AL ACTIVITY THAT REMAINS NEGLECTED. HE GAVE AS EXAMPLE QUESTION OF GOB PARTICIPATION IN COMMONWEALTH GAMES, ALL-AFRICAN GAMES, ETC, WHICH GOB BYPASSED FOR LACK OF ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION. MATENGE SAID HIS UNANNOUNCED VISIT TO THE RESIDENCE WAS TESTIMONY OF FACT THAT "WE ARE DESPERATE" AND NEED ASSURANCES, INCLUDING SPECIFIC INFORMATION RE ETA, FOLLOWED BY ACTION.

5. IN RESPONSE, I REVIEWED STATUS OF OUR REQUEST FOR SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US. I NOTED OUR EFFORTS TO RECRUIT CAREFULLY, PRESENT GOB WITH MORE THAN ONE CANDIDATE, ETC. MATENGE INTERRUPTED TO SAY HE APPRECIATED US OBJECTIVITY AND THOROUGHNESS; IN THIS CASE, GOB WOULD BE WILLING TO FOREGO FORMALITIES AND TAKE A CHANCE ON THE MOST AVAILABLE CANDIDATE. I SAID I WOULD TRANSMIT HIS URGENT CONCERN. HE ASKED THAT I ADD A REQUEST THAT AN ETA FOR A SPORTS ADMINIS- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRATOR BE RECEIVED ONE WEEK HENCE, I.E., JULY 24; OTHERWISE, IN ALL FRANKNESS, HE COULD GIVE NO ASSURANCES THAT POSITION WOULD STILL BE OPEN TO US CANDIDATE.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: (A) NAME OF CANDIDATE, OR MORE THAN ONE IF AVAILABLE, FOR SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR POSITION IN BOTSWANA; AND (B) EARLIEST ETA OF EACH CANDIDATE IN REPLY TO THIS MESSAGE BY JULY 24.
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